

Prevention and Maintenance – A Winning Combination

Sheila Jones, Dynamac Corp. for the Directorate of Safety, Health and Environment

What do tractors and the environment have in common? The answer is Engineering/Documentation System, Inc. (EDSI), the motor vehicle and equipment maintenance contractor for APG. EDSI plays an important role in the installation's pollution prevention program. They keep APG's combat, tactical, commercial and special purpose equipment in good working order while improving worker health and safety, saving money, and preserving the environment. All types of equipment, from weed eaters to mobile cranes, are maintained by EDSI. An environmentally conscious organization, EDSI protects its workers and the environment by reducing, reusing and recycling materials used in equipment maintenance.

Preventing pollution from the very start is the best way to protect the environment. Howard Nason, EDSI division manager, sums it up by saying, "The less garbage you bring in the front door, the less you have to worry about getting rid of later. Our intent at EDSI is to eliminate as many hazardous products and processes that require them as possible." EDSI is replacing aerosol products with non-aerosol alternatives. Even though aerosol sprays are no longer made with chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) that destroy the earth's protective ozone layer, many aerosols contain other harmful propellants. Aerosol cans may also explode in extreme heat or a fire since they are pressurized, so eliminating aerosol cans in the maintenance facilities reduces this potential threat to workers and emergency responders.

APG will purchase nearly 20,000 aerosol cans in 1998, but there are many non-aerosol substitutes available. For example, EDSI now buys WD-40® in pump spray bottles, rather than aerosol cans. Aerosol alternatives are also available for cutting grease. EDSI employees now use a citrus cleaner and an air-compressed sprayer. The Sure Shot® works like an aerosol by spraying cleaning fluids into nooks and crannies, but without polluting propellants.

Aqueous parts washers also reduce cleaning solvents at EDSI. Like several other APG activities, EDSI has replaced solvent cleaning tanks with parts washers that use hot water and detergent. Dirty parts are loaded into the machine that works somewhat like an industrial dishwasher. Within a few minutes, the parts are clean, and costly tank maintenance contracts have been eliminated. Workers like the parts washers because they save time and do not expose them to hazardous solvents.

When materials cannot be reduced, reusing them is better than recycling. EDSI has turned in tires that are no longer useful at APG to the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Organization (DRMO) which will find another government agency

to utilize them. Instead of throwing away rags used in the shops, EDSI has them laundered and reuses them many times. To prevent storm water pollution, EDSI made covers for fuel tanks out of scrap metal at a fraction of the cost of buying them.

By consolidating activities and making all services available in both the Aberdeen and Edgewood areas, EDSI cut costs to the customer and reduced pollution from transportation. EDSI also recycles many materials, including oil and fuel filters, used oil and hydraulic fluid, antifreeze, scrap metal, batteries and printer and copier cartridges.

Preventing pollution is an integral part of the EDSI organization. "They [the employees] are always looking for safer products and better ways to do business" said Nason. For more information about how you can prevent pollution on the job or at home, contact the APG Pollution Prevention Office at 278-4529 or 278-7898.

Disclaimer:

APG does not endorse any particular product or manufacturer.

Photo caption:

Karl Griffin, chief quality control inspector, degreases equipment using a compressed air sprayer and a citrus-based cleaner

Photo credit: Liz Longenecker

Practicing Pollution Prevention

Reduce

Reducing the amounts of hazardous materials, water and energy you use is the best way to prevent pollution.

- ◆ Install low-flow nozzles on shower heads and aerators on faucets
- ◆ Buy only the amount of materials necessary for a job. Don't overstock
- ◆ Choose products with the least amount of packaging. About \$1 of every \$10 we spend on food pays for the packaging.
- ◆ Buy appliances and computers with the Energy Star® label
- ◆ Mix 1 tablespoon of vinegar or lemon juice in 1 quart of water to clean glass. Wipe with old newspaper

Reuse

To prevent pollution, at work and at home, avoid buying disposable items. Using 1000 throwaway plastic teaspoons consumes over 10 times for energy and natural resources than making one stainless steel teaspoon and washing it 1000 times.

- ◆ Wrap gifts with cartoons or old maps
- ◆ Borrow, rent or share items used infrequently
- ◆ Repair, sell or donate goods instead of throwing them out
- ◆ Shop with canvas, handle bags
- ◆ Use rechargeable batteries

Recycle

- ◆ Participate in the curbside recycling program on post or in your community. The schedule for APG pick up is printed on page 1 of the *APG News*.
- ◆ Participate in workplace recycling programs.

Buy Recycled

- ◆ Buy products made with the highest content of **post**-consumer recycled content you can find. Post-consumer content is the material that you, as a consumer, have recycled. Pre-consumer materials are usually factory scraps. Look for products marked with the APG Pollution Prevention logo in the Self Service Supply Center for assistance.

